

S-E-C-R-E-T

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

28 January 1964

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: CYPRUS: The Problem of Keeping the Peace

1. On Cyprus, the Greek and Turkish communities are so far estranged by mutual distrust and fear that only outside intervention can prevent widespread violence. Of the three Guarantor Powers, Greece and Turkey is each too deeply involved with its own Cypriot community to be able to alleviate present tensions. In fact, a breakdown of the present precarious truce would almost certainly lead to active military intervention by Turkey, to which Greece would feel compelled to respond.

2. The third guarantor, Britain, which now carries the main burden of keeping the peace, is unwilling to do so indefinitely, especially in the absence of any prospect of a political solution to the impasse between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The nature of such a solution is beyond the scope of this memorandum; it is enough to note that the London-Zurich settlement appears beyond

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification
S-E-C-R-E-T

MORI/CDF

S-E-C-R-E-T

revival and that any new arrangement must almost certainly be a fairly far-reaching one. In these circumstances, the British feel it impossible, physically and in both British and Cypriot political terms, for them to keep peace on the island single-handed. We think this judgment is correct; things have gone so far that outside intervention, beyond the Guarantor Powers, will be needed to keep order, or to restore it.

3. Late as it is, this may still be possible. We believe that both Athens and Ankara, though fatalistic, are genuinely concerned by the prospect of further violence, and that this dread is widely shared within the rival Turkish and Greek communities on the island, even though their attitudes toward one another remain intransigent and bellicose.

4. Various sources for a peacekeeping force have been suggested: the UN, the Commonwealth, the NATO membership. Some Greek Cypriot leaders seem to lean to the UN; the UK and the present government of Greece favor an allied force drawn from NATO members; Turkey sets some store by continuing or expanding a Turkish contingent on the island and is dubious about UN participation lest in some fashion it involve Soviet influence in a sensitive area. However, so far no party has taken an adamant position for any one sort of peacekeeping

- 2 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

force, though in this sort of situation, and with these protagonists, attitudes can harden rapidly.

5. For many reasons, time is of the essence. Efforts to build either a UN or an official NATO force could be delayed by the objections of unwilling members. However, such delays could be avoided by constituting a force drawn from some NATO countries, though not under NATO jurisdiction. A Commonwealth force might also be speedily pulled together, but it would probably be hard to get more than token contingents except from the UK, and the total would probably fall far short of the 10,000 troops that might be needed. Financing would be somewhat easier for an Allied group than for a UN or Commonwealth one. Finally, although a UN force, if introduced in time, might be able to keep the peace, it would be less likely than a NATO or a Commonwealth force to muster the combination of firmness and restraint needed to cope with major violence. A UN force would somewhat increase the ability of the Soviets to cause embarrassment and difficulty in Cyprus.

6. Virtually none of the parties at interest shows any confidence in a peacekeeping venture unless the US is, and is seen to be, deeply involved. The Turkish Cypriots were badly mauled and severely frightened by the December outbreaks, and Ankara will not

- 3 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

delegate any responsibility for their safety to any but a most trusted ally. The complications of an international force would be considerable: objections will inevitably come from the Bloc and many Afro-Asian countries will join in unless the force has clear approval from the government of Cyprus. This means Makarios. We believe that he, if faced with the unanimous agreement of the Guarantor Powers backed by the US, would accept such a peacekeeping force.

7. So long as the US is not clearly and fully involved in the peacekeeping enterprise, the Cypriot communities, and to some degree the Greeks and Turks as well, will be less than wholehearted in the search for acceptable compromises. Each party will rather be tempted to advance its cause by making private appeals to the US. However, it must also be recognized that, once involved, the US will almost certainly remain engaged until some settlement is reached, -- and that a settlement will be hard to find.

- 4 -

S-E-C-R-E-T